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Seager, Henry R. *Social Insurance: Program of Social Reform.* Pp. v, 175. Price, \$1.00. New York: Macmillan Company, 1910.

In this work Professor Seager has given to the public the Kennedy Lectures delivered by him in 1910 in the New York School of Philanthropy. To the reviewer this work commends itself from two points of view—as a contribution to the literature of workmen's compensation and insurance, and as a courageous advocacy of the general principle that certain of our more pressing social problems can be adequately met only by the state itself taking direct positive action. From the first viewpoint the book makes no pretense of being a work of original research or even one giving a full account of action which has been taken in this and other countries in the field to which it relates. Instead, it is an effort to bring before social workers the importance which the questions having to do with the insurance of the poorer classes occupy in the general program of social work, and the more significant features of the problems involved.

In successive chapters each of the contingencies, accidents, sickness, invalidity resulting from old age or other causes, and unemployment, which are responsible for the economic insurety of labor, is taken up for consideration. The value of this consideration lies, not in the bringing out of facts not previously readily accessible in other works, but in the fact that it gives us the clearly-expressed opinion of one of our leading economists regarding the many difficult questions of policy which this subject of workmen's insurance presents. On all these questions the author has let his audience know exactly where he stands.

As already stated, a second point of interest in this volume is the emphatic repudiation by the author of the principle of laissez-faire as regards the attitude that the state should occupy towards measures of social reform. "It is the purpose of these lectures," the author writes, "to insist that for the other sections of the country—the sections in which manufacturing and trade have become the dominant interests of the people, in which towns and cities have grown up, and in which the wage-earner is the typical American citizen—the simple creed of individualism is no longer adequate. For these sections we need, not freedom from governmental interference, but clear appreciation of the conditions which make for common welfare, as contrasted with individual success, and an aggressive program for governmental control and regulation to maintain these conditions."

Specifically the author denies that action taken by the state for the insurance of workmen tends to lessen the spirit of independence and self-help which is the most valuable possession of any people. On the contrary, he holds that by increasing the workman's sense of security he relieves him of the deadening effect of the feeling which the poorer classes have of the hopelessness of their efforts to improve their conditions. This is the old question which has divided economists and social workers for years, and which will probably continue to divide them for years to come. In this contest of opinion, however, victory is steadily inclining towards the side of those maintaining the beneficent effect of assistance from the out-

side, where experience has clearly shown that a class unaided cannot work out its own salvation.

W. F. WILLOUGHBY.

Washington, D. C.

Small, A. W. *The Meaning of Social Science.* Pp. vii, 309. Price, \$1.50.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1910.

In the ten lectures here included Professor Small is seeking to interpret to mature minds the present status and problems of social science. Unless one knows something of the field the volume will prove difficult reading. The more advanced student will find it both stimulating and suggestive.

"Knowledge of human experience cannot at best be many: in the degree in which it approaches reality it must be one knowledge." "The main function of the social sciences is to make out the meaning of human experience." This is the keynote to the first three chapters, "Unity of Social Science," "Disunity of the Social Sciences," "Sociological Reassertion of Unity." Here is emphasized the present lack of correlation and collaboration of the sciences—a necessary stage perchance which must yield however to a new conception of unity. There is an "universal reciprocity" between the parts of human experience—this involves interconnections—harmony no matter what becomes of any given study—say sociology.

"The Centre of Dissertation" (chapter IV) indicates that there must be some rallying point and this is the task of interpreting the actions of men. Here sociologists have often gone astray, and by setting up such abstractions as "society" have lost sight of the real man.

In chapter V—the Social Sciences as Terms in One Formula—the author asserts his conviction that the special studies are hardly justified unless the larger relations are kept constantly in mind. "How can we tell whether the emphasis in economic theory should be on production or on distribution until we decide in some provisional way at least, what the goal of economic progress should be?" is his pertinent question. The trouble frequently is that "social scientists are not interested in the fundamental logic of the relations which they profess to interpret."

In the lecture on The Descriptive Phase of Social Science, Professor Small gives the sociologist credit for insisting "that the aim of social science should be nothing less than coherent interpretation of human experience in the large." He suggests a scheme for a large research into some period of history and shows how the various groups might co-operate therein.

"Science is abortion until its function is complete in action." Hence in "The Analytical Phase of Social Science," the discovery of the different valuations of the human groups and their efforts to achieve these in daily life is indicated as the function of the student. This leads to "The Evaluating Phase of Social Science" when we can apply our estimates of moral values. The most reliable criterion would be the consensus of scientists representing the largest possible variety of human interests. Such evaluations will result in "The Constructive Phase." No fixed rule exists for the transfer from